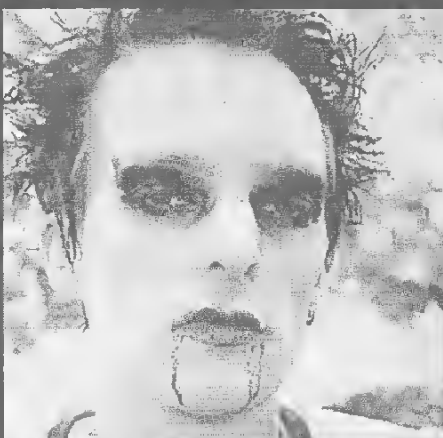


Vaseline is an underground queer core event that takes place in Toronto. Will Munro, a hardcore kid and artist, is the mastermind behind the event. The event has been running on a monthly basis for the last two years and has developed quite the reputation with stories about mud wrestling, dildo bobbing, and roller derbies. I had a chance to speak with Will about his roots in the hardcore scene, his development as an artist, and the development of one of the most important underground alternative queer events that has happened to Toronto: Vaseline. Interview by Stephe Perry.



**Vaseline was proof enough
that he was a sodomite.**

MRR: Tell us about your background with regards to the Vaseline event. Where did you start? What did you do before Vaseline?

Will: Well I grew up a suburban kid, so I always had a need to meet people, network with people, and do things. I was always into punk and skating as a kid. I started coming downtown a lot to go to hardcore shows, and was really involved in the hardcore scene for a long time. When I moved downtown, I moved to go to art school, so I have always had a strong connection to the art community in Toronto, being an artist making work and meeting other people who are making work. So those are kind of my communities—the arts, music, punk, and queer community are sort of a whole bunch of different communities that I participate in and that I try and bring together, because they don't always come together. They sort of overlap sometimes.

MRR: I knew you from the hardcore scene initially, and then I saw this exhibition that you did when you were in art school. It involved your underwear art, and Michael Coren, a Born Again Christian with the *Toronto Sun*, panned the exhibit, but everyone else seemed to love it. Then slowly you started getting some recognition for your underwear art. *Vice* magazine wrote you up in the "Tidbits" section—they had a picture of the "Anarchy" underwear. Do people know you for your underwear art or Vaseline?

Will: People who have been around know me for both things. I was making a lot of artwork for about two or three years, and publicly showing it probably

two or three years before I started doing Vaseline, so I would say that a fair amount of people know me for my art, but because there has been a lot of media about Vaseline they probably just see me as some club promoter. It's hard to say. But I want to say that it was really funny when Michael Coren slammed me because he had never even seen the show. He just got an invitation and was offended by the invitation because the invitation was on underwear, and he just went off on a tangent. He didn't even talk to me. On top of that, he published the article before the installation was even half done. He had obviously never seen the exhibit.

The thing in *Vice* Magazine was stolen from *Mix* Magazine, an artist-run culture magazine. It was a review of a show that I did at Who's Emma for Active Resistance, and it was supposed to be about queer youth and activism, young queer radicals, and the connection between being queer and wanting to do activism. So I did a review for *Mix* so that it would get around and it got around more. I guess *Vice* likes to steal things from other magazines.

MRR: What is the connection to male briefs? Where did this connection to underwear start? What sort of significance has underwear taken on?

Will: I first got interested in briefs when I was really young, because I liked other little boys. But the connection to why I make art with them is because when I was still in high school and living in the suburbs, I was madly in love with my best friend. He would leave me alone in his mom's apartment sometimes, and I would take his underwear and put them on, and I stole a couple of

FRI. JAN. 21. 2000

SEDUCED & ABANDONED
PRESENT

VASELINE



ROCK N ROLL QUEER BAR

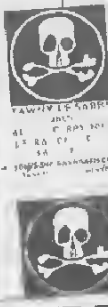
THE ELMOCOMBO 464 SPADINA
DOORS OPEN 10 PM 75 MT DOOR 948-2661
DJS MISS BARBARAFISCH, RAWBERT, CHICO
DROP HARDCORE ROCK, PUNK, CLAM, METAL

LIVE PERFORMANCE BY
THE QUEENS OF COUNTRY
METAL

VASELINE
ROCK N ROLL QUEER BAR
FR DAY JAN 26TH



THE
NEED



L. MONROE Presents
VASELINE
ALL QUEER BAR
York Trash Queen
BUNNY
Just Wets Panties
into Appearance!
ICES at 11PM
RT X
R 29TH

FRIDAY
EL MOCAMBO
Montreal
Sophisto-Popsters
The Dears
with
Music For Map Makers
TX + VASELINE-57 + DEARS 56 \$5 0 BOTH

DOWNSTAIRS!

pairs. At that point that was the only way I felt it was possible to get close to him. It was all very romantic, at first. The significance was boy/gay attraction to same sex, sexuality—in general—and body image. Now the significance is all over the map, but after researching the history of underwear, its history openly explains some of the roots of body shame, hygiene, gender, class, and sexuality.

MRR: Explain how underwear is connected to male body shame.

Will: When I did a lot of research about underwear, I found out that underwear was first made and worn and produced in the Victorian era, and the only reason why they created it was because they felt that their bodies were disgusting and dirty, and they didn't want their clothes—their wonderful fabulous garments—to touch them. The Victorian era is responsible for our ideas of our dysfunctional modern body image. The first purpose of underwear was to distance our bodies from what is on top of them and what we are wearing instead of wearing something to display our bodies. The idea suggests that underwear could be responsible, subconsciously, for the way we perceive our body image. Everyone's body image is different, but I think the overall culture sends out a pretty dysfunctional message about how our bodies are or how they should be. It was also a big class thing. It was a very upper class thing to wear underwear when it was first made because lower class people—paupers or poor people—didn't worry about their bodies dirtying their clothes because their clothes were mostly dirty. It was linked with class. It was an upper class privilege to have this body shame that I think over the years has been well distributed throughout every class. Body shame is a fairly all-encompassing thing.

I also think there is a connection to body image between gender and underwear. While girls have girls' underwear and boys have boys'. Historically, in places like Stonewall in New York, a lot of queers crossdressed for fear of reprisal from the police. Some people were obvious trans, but some people were obviously crossdressing for the fact that when cops came in, if you were dancing with someone of the same sex—one person is crossdressing and the other person isn't—you look like a straight couple, so it stops people from assuming that you are queer. It was a very popular thing to crossdress in a lot of underground queer bars in the 30s and 40s. Police would arrest people who crossdressed because it was illegal to wear the opposite sex's clothing. You would be jailed if you were wearing the opposite sex's underwear. If you were wearing your own sex's underwear you wouldn't be jailed because they would reason that you weren't actually transsexual. They kind of understood that they were doing it just to get away with being queer. And there was a lot of persecution around that, about enforcing gender through what kind of clothing you were wearing. Underwear being that base clothing. I think it has a big connection to do with sexism and body

image.

MRR: You have some underwear on the back cover of the latest Limp Wrist EP. Can you tell us about the underwear and how the idea came about? I think you were talking about going to see them at a show and you had a whole suit planned...

Will: I always plan on going to see Limp Wrist, but it doesn't really materialize. I actually was going to New York to go to D.U.M.B.A., and they had played the week before. I couldn't go because I was working. Some friends of mine had gone and told me about it and I was all pissed off because I wanted to go, but when I got to New York a friend of mine, who is this film junkie, had filmed the whole concert on Super 8 sound stripe. It was the sound and the visuals of the whole concert, and the sound was like perfect—it was like being at the show—so I saw the show on film. It seems like Martin's really big thing is to get people to take their clothes off and dance hard and stuff so I thought that was really funny because everyone was jumping around in their underwear, so I thought people need to have Limp Wrist underwear. So I thought, especially in hardcore culture with everyone trying to be all fly and letting their pants hang down, I thought underwear is obviously a visible thing so I appropriated that Old English tough guy script and embroidered it into the waist band. You can't really tell on the 7," but it is all hand embroidered. I planned a couple of outfits. I wanted to make a more youth crew pair of underwear and have "LIMP WRIST XXX" right on the ass in Old English font and maybe a hoodie or something like that. I was thinking gloves, too, because there was that whole straight edge connection with wearing working gloves. I was thinking of making a little more gender fuck by making some lacy new wave gloves with sequined "X's" or something and kind of fucking with the testosterone of it all.

MRR: What is Vaseline?

Will: Vaseline is a petroleum product that has been on the market as long as there was one. People like Jean Genet used to carry a tube of it in the back pocket of his pants. When police found him and discovered it, they would throw him in jail. Vaseline was proof enough that he was a sodomite. Later on Lou Reed would hang out in his favorite NYC hotspots appropriately coined "Vaseline Bars." Sid Vicious would spike his hair up with it. I also found out that Vaseline, the trademark, was appropriated by a bunch of British queer indie/punkers who started an indie nite club which, under corporate pressure, changed its name to Club V. The club has since deceased. Vaseline in Toronto is actually the second queer punk nightclub internationally.

MRR: Tell us more about Club V. When did it start?

Will: I don't know when it actually started. A couple of months after I started Vaseline, a friend of mine from New York was like, "Do you know about Club V in England?" I didn't know that there was another one. He was like, "Yeah, it's really cool. You should know about it." So he gave me this zine with Le Tigre on the cover. They were around for a long time. They were around for at least six or seven years, so they go back to the early or mid 90s. All I know about Club V is that I am on a queer punk chat with Sarit, one of the girls who started it, and that there was a collective of people—four or

five people—once a month and that it was mainstream playing in clubs and music by stream there frequently it was same mandala live band a bit different ed up until party.

MRR: So you will: I had emailed me what was going because they they just change are going to we'll change play the gay Club V right

MRR: Can Will: Unless the trademark legal letter using their t ers. There w a small quee performances same proble mark which a grey area ly have the because we Their trade queer punk So they do have a lot of play games and there.

going to see **MRR:** Is it Will: "Vas because it change fo "Creme" D her, just as **MRR:** Bu this any fe Will: A co had Vaseline they freak spelling an fuck off. F lawyers th ter to do th paid \$80,0 trademark must be h **MRR:** I Vaseline. event?

Will: People pining in Mocambo crowds. Q dominating gay skinb hardcore I can expect jected on drag hosts a bunch o **MRR:** W did Vase Will: I st somewhere

le to get close
was boyness
age. Now the
story of under-
body shame,

shame.
ut that under-
era, and the
bodies were
ir wonderful
ossible for our
ase of under-
and what we
The idea sug-
the way we
ut I think the
our bod-
a very upper
lower class
dies dirtying
d with class.
ink over the
ne is a fair-

and under-
historically, in
for fear of
ome people
in, if you
ossdressing
tops people
ossdress in
arrest peo-
ex's cloth-
underwear.
be jailed
They kind
ing queer.
ng gender
being that
and body

he under-
you had a

w York to
s of mine
friend of
t was the
being at
people to
se every-
st under-
their their
that Old
e 7," but
rew pair
maybe a
straight
der fuck
ing with

People
and him
domine.
Vaseline
ark, was
under
ronto is

riend of
ut there
ne this
ast six
queer
four or

five people—that put Club V together, that it started once a month and it moved to being a weekly thing, and that it was, at the time, the only alternative to mainstream gay club culture. Their focus was more on playing independent music, music by women, and music by people of color, because in the mainstream there was no room for any of that and consequently it was never played. Their focus was also the same mandate with live music—they always had a live band and DJs. The musical content was a little bit different, but very similar in its intentions. It lasted up until last year. Last year they had their last party.

MRR: So you didn't know about Club V?

Will: I had no idea. It is really funny—Sarit had emailed me once because she wanted to talk about what was going on with being sued by Vaseline because they had the same problems in England—they just changed their name right away, whereas we are going to play hardball with them and, "Oh yeah, we'll change the spelling and change one letter" and play the game that way, whereas they changed to Club V right away.

MRR: Can you tell us about the lawsuit?

Will: Unilever, which is the corporation that owns the trademark for the product Vaseline, sent us a legal letter threatening to sue us if we didn't stop using their trademark. They called up the club owners. There was a similar legal suit that happened with a small queer youth group that were putting on performances under the name Fruit Loops. They had the same problem with the people who owned the trademark which was Kellogg's. So I knew that there was a grey area in this thing; the corporation doesn't really have the power or the right to tell us not to use it because we are not infringing on their trademark. Their trademark is for petroleum jelly and we are a queer punk night, so they are totally different things. So they don't really have a legal case, but they do have a lot of money to fuck us over. So basically we play games with them and change the spelling here and there. Things that we know that they are not going to see, we just put "Vaseline" on it.

MRR: Is that like the Vasoween event?

Will: "Vasoween" was just because it was funny because it was Halloween and sometimes we do change for specific events, like when Vaginal "Cremer" Davis was here, we called it Vageline for her, just as a joke, so it was kind of funny.

MRR: But Unilever (Vaseline) hasn't pursued this any further?

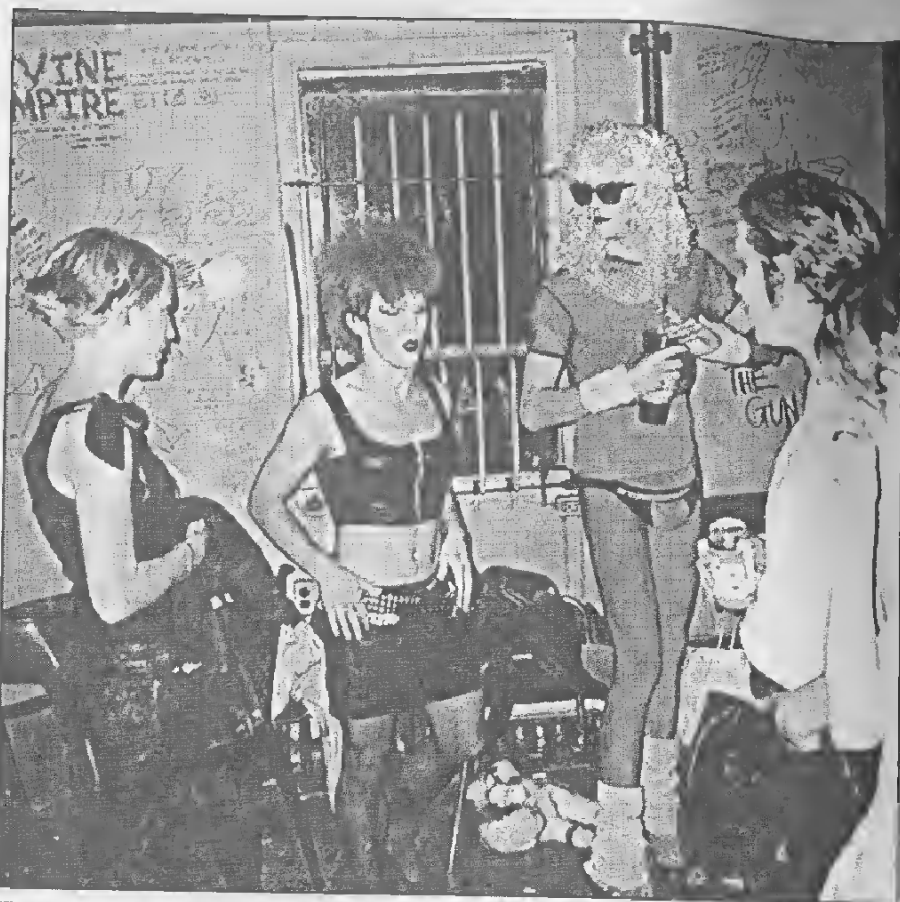
Will: A couple of months ago they saw a poster that had Vaseline spelled the same as their trademark and they freaked out again. So I had to change my poster spelling and my handbill spelling so that they would fuck off. Basically they have a bunch of corporate lawyers that are sitting around and have nothing better to do than bother people like me because they get paid \$80,000 a year so that no one infringes on their trademark. That's their one and only job, right, so it must be hard.

MRR: I have heard all kinds of stories about Vaseline. What can people expect at a Vaseline event?

Will: People can expect that Vaseline will be happening in a big dirty rock 'n' roll club named the el Mocombo. They can expect one of the most diverse crowds. Queer punks, metal dykes and fags, bears, dominatrixes, drag kings, transsexual girls and boys, gay skinheads, straight rock 'n' rollers, glam rockers, hardcore kids, drag queens, and go-go dancers. You can expect underground movies or porn being projected on Super 8 or 16 mm film, lots of decorations, drag hosts, crazy club competitions, and live bands, a bunch of DJs and lots of hot shake action.

MRR: What was the purpose for Vaseline? How did Vaseline get its start?

Will: I started Vaseline out of desperation, to have somewhere to go other than mainstream gay clubs.



The majority in this and most cities play awful music. I wanted to start a club where all the marginal parts of the queer community could be celebrated. A place that would play music that also had a strong connection to queerness, other than disco. Rock 'n' roll and punk music have more queer content than any other musical genre. I also wanted a place where there was not segregation between boys and girls and everybody in between. A place where people could get dressed up, try new things, cruise, and dance all night.

MRR: There is an emphasis on DJs at your events. Where did this idea come from?

Will: Growing up in the punk scene, either you danced or you didn't dance. If you danced, you danced hard and if you didn't dance you were probably against dancing hard and you didn't do anything, and you basically tried to protect your ass from getting clobbered by people who were dancing hard. I was never really exposed to any fun dancing, necessarily. But I have always been involved in a lot of different music scenes and cultures in this city. I went to a lot of underground house parties and old school disco parties and house parties people threw in their houses with lots of different DJs and got into dancing and actually started going to a lot of dance parties to see DJs. I sort of realized that I am still really connected with the punk community and just the fact that there is not a lot of dancing that necessarily happens in that scene. So when I decided to do Vaseline, I wanted to make it more of a party where you could really freak out and dance. Also there would be lots of entertainment, so that people who weren't comfortable dancing, or don't dance, have something else to do, but people who want to dance can dance. I also think that because it is a queer event—and dancing is a huge part of the queer community—people who aren't into mainstream music don't have a lot of options when it comes to a queer space. It was an important thing to make a space where lots of queer people could be together, dancing to a different kind of beat that wasn't being heard

anywhere else in this city. For me, I think dancing is really good because people can really express themselves and lose their inhibitions and not really care about anything else that is going on. I think it is like a really good release. It is something for people who don't drink. It is the ultimate entertainment. A lot of parties just aren't very fun if there isn't anything else to do because people are usually just getting bombed, whereas dancing you are having as much fun as people getting wasted. It can be a more entertaining way to party.

MRR: There is other elements that you have borrowed from the dance scene. You use these flyers—small handbill flyers that are full color and glossy. They remind me totally of how underground parties work in terms of promotion. But I have never seen that in hardcore. I have seen handbills as flyers, but they are usually cheap photocopies. But yours are more decked out around the theme of the event. That seems to be a conscious thing.

Will: It is totally a co-opting of underground party promotion. Handbills were important in the dance scene because a lot of parties just happened in weird warehouses and exclusive locations. It was really important to let people know how to get in contact to find out where the party is or where to buy tickets or whatever. I always saw that scene as very similar to the hardcore scene because it was fairly DIY. The dance scene was just a bunch of kids who were throwing parties for themselves. Prices were obviously a little bit more expensive but there was also an underground to that. There were really cheap affordable places to hear good music. And I sort of thought that punk kids do promotion in a very similar way but just a more low budget version. I feel that people are throwing photocopied handbills in the garbage and it was wasteful. Flyers seem so disposable whereas something that is nice that almost has some sort of historical content and is interesting, people actually hold onto it. They keep it. They put it up on their wall. So I started doing promotion that way

because I found it only costs a little bit more than xeroxing and that it actually got the message out a lot better. I was able to let people know what the theme was going to be, but also put cultural icons on these things and celebrate queer culture through my promotion. So it was sort of like promotion, but also sort of like an education at the same time.

MRR: These handbills become like queer trading cards.

Will: They are totally like queer trading cards, because they have all got amazing underground queer icons on them. That is totally what I meant to do with them. I am really glad to learn how to bring those things together because I don't think a lot of people have brought that to hardcore or punk or even rock'n roll.

MRR: How long has Vaseline been going for?

Will: I started Vaseline in January of 2000 and we have been running ever since.

MRR: What happened at the first Vaseline event?

Will: The first Vaseline event I basically booked twenty days before it happened. Basically some friends of mine were willing to get us a space. I hooked a local band called Queen Size Shag and got a bunch of friends I knew who were good DJs. They didn't necessarily DJ, but I thought they should DJ because they had a great knowledge of music. I made some flyers and just promoted the hell out of it. "Come and check this out." It went really well with only ten or fifteen days to promote it. I thought, if people will come out to support this with such little notice, I bet you there is more of a need for this. I was just testing the waters to see if this could happen, and the response was so good that I just kept doing them. Initially, my intentions were to do really local stuff and then I started getting bigger and bigger, but there is only so much local live talent that you can get, whereas on a more national and international level there are lots of people you can bring from all over the place to perform, so it just sort of grew from there.

MRR: What are some of the things that have happened at other Vaseline events?

Will: Every month we try to have an audience participation event to get people loosened up and also get them involved. We have done some pretty crazy things so far, like, Roller Derby, Mud Wrestling, amateur stripping, we just had bobbing for dildos, blowjob competition, and various costume competitions. Themes included Vasoween (Halloween), cowboy theme (for Glen Meadmore), a prom mas-



sacre. It's more than a little bit out of control, at times.

MRR: Maybe you could describe to me how you set up a Roller Derby track in the el Mocambo?

Will: I think the events that happen at Vaseline are part of how it grew. My experience with Toronto is that it is very conservative, in terms of how people express themselves or how much they freak out. I wanted to do things that would loosen people up. So that's how we started doing events. Plus the events were also fun to do. Get on really stupid outfits and do some dumb things. It was fun and entertaining. I think a lot of people came to check Vaseline out just because they would hear these crazy stories about the events.

MRR: Well they are great things to talk about, but they also represent great memories for people who participate.

Will: Oh yeah, totally. People totally get involved and do things that they would have never done and express themselves a lot more than they do usually so for sure. That was totally what I wanted to do, is to get people to come out of their shells. With the roller derby track, what we did was because the upstairs of the el Mocambo is a fairly big space on each side of the stage and the dance floor. We took one of those sides and moved all the tables out and had a metal divider, like a railing, to separate people

who are moving from those sitting down. We just cleared that whole area, put some tables in the middle to make a track, and roped the rest of it off so that people wouldn't walk into the track. We didn't have the track going all night. The roller derby was just something that happened for half an hour before the band. When we promote the event we tell people what we are doing: "There is a roller derby happening." We tell regulars, "If you want to participate, bring some roller skates and some knee pads and just join in." About 15 people showed up with roller skates and crazy outfits and stuff. We had a judge, too, that had a gun to start off the event. We just went around the track ten times and it was pretty crazy. It was out of control. We did three rounds. Chose a winner for each round. Can't remember what we gave people for that. We usually make some sort of a prize for each event.

MRR: For the mudwrestling, how did you get a pen of mud in the club? How did you convince club owners that this would be OK?

Will: That was sort of a country theme, so we thought mud wrestling was appropriate for that party. Basically, we got a Ninja Turtle pool, or some cheap plastic kids' pool, and we decorated it with some tinsel fringe around the edge. For the mud we were going to go to a river and get mud, but it was pretty dry at that time of year so there wasn't any mud. So we just got a couple of bags of topsoil and added oil and water and it looked pretty disgusting. It was really funny because we tried to get people to join in. There were two or three people who were planning and had worked out a way to mudwrestle beforehand. We wanted people from the audience to join in. To just take their clothes off so they wouldn't get that dirty. We had a hose out back. It was summer. We were just hosing people off when they got dirty, but no one would join in because we were joking about putting motor oil and maure in to make it more exciting. I think everyone took it seriously. They got freaked out by it, but they enjoyed the wrestling. They didn't want to jump in shit. It made a pretty big mess of the club. The mud was all over the floor. And Glen Meadmore was going on right after and no one would even move up to the stage because it was so muddy we had get all these newspapers and clean it up for them before they would come and watch.

MRR: Who is Glen Meadmore? Explain his relationship with the cowboy theme.

Will: Glen Meadmore is this crazy guy, this queer punker who has been around for a long time. He is actually from from Winnipeg and lived in Toronto and then moved to L.A. So he has been in L.A. for a really long time, probably ten or fifteen years, and he has put out music under a number of different names. He is probably most familiar under his own moniker, Glen Meadmore. He has sort of had this Born Again



Christian p
totally a c
by John W
he kind of
boy outfit
all-dyke s
special for
theme. We
we had the
country m
were really
there is pr
holes and
good ole b
it or seen
MRR: B
Vasoween
Will: Yeah
bing for di
MRR: W
Will: Peop
had gone t
ious dildos
big huge
Halloweer
it is also a
sex games
things. We
we had to
would be c
to get a di
that was li
MRR: Tel
Will: It wa
up with th
name kept
wanted to
Halloweer
in history
stuff publi
cities, the
Halloweer
sort of bla
and four h
there is sti
getting rea
is a part o
we just th
Halloweer
MRR: I w
rock prom
Pennsylv
Will: It pr
actually a
own ideas
I never lik
never wan
own distas
punks—I
school cul
tain aspec
because of
initely a c
gay comm
and stuff
would be
normal hig
and intere
with.
MRR: W
Will: Well
get massa
was that w
someone
ended up
when peo
and preter
people did
actually g

Christian gay honky tonk queer punk band going on for five or six years. He is totally a crazy dude. His latest album cover has a picture of him that was painted by John Wayne Gacy on the cover and it totally looks like Howdy Doody. And he kind of has this Roy Rogers stage presence. He wears really flamboyant cowboy outfits. I saw him once at a Homocore show in Chicago, and it was like an all-dyke squaredancing mosh pit. I was inspired by that. I wanted to do something special for when he came to Toronto, so we did a bit of a Honky Tonk cowboy theme. We painted a mural—it was a desert scene that we put behind him—and we had the mudwrestling. We had Dallas Goode spin some really weird and rare country music for him and it was really fun to have him. I think a lot of people were really freaked out by him because they had never heard his music before and there is pretty strange banter that he goes on about, like "This song is about glory holes and boys and getting your crack greased..." It is a very old school, kind of good ole boy queerness, and it is pretty shocking at first if you have never heard it or seen it before. It is pretty entertaining.

MRR: Bobbing for dildos is such a great idea. Was that part of the Vasoween/Halloween theme?

Will: Yeah, we had a costume competition for Halloween and we also had bobbing for dildos.

MRR: What did people have to do?

Will: People were on stage at a table with a huge bucket filled with water and I had gone to a really awful cheap mainstream sex store and got some pretty hilarious dildos, like multi colored ones and cheap ones, and we put them all into the big huge bucket of water. It is sort of a take on "Bobbing for apples" at Halloween. You know how people do that at Halloween when they are kids. And it is also a take on safer sex carnivals and safer sex outreach things to play weird sex games to get people to think about safe sex, so it was a spin on both those things. We had people come up from the audience—we actually had too many—we had to get people to get off the stage and people would do it in pairs. So there would be two people and then we would count to three and then the first person to get a dildo in their mouth and out of the water won and they got the dildo and that was like the prize.

MRR: Tell us about the Vasoween theme.

Will: It was a costume party and we called it Vasoween because someone came up with the name as a gag. We were getting hit by the corporate pressure and the name kept changing with the spelling so it was just sort of a joke. Basically we wanted to have a really huge costume party, because a lot of people claim Halloween as a queer holiday because of its pagan connections and also because in history it was always the time where people got away with doing a lot of queer stuff publicly that wasn't accepted normally. In the gay neighborhoods, in most cities, they will even shut down the main streets and have huge parties on Halloween. But anything mainstream and gay has become homogenized and just sort of bland. Not as many people dressing up. It's like one person dressing up and four hundred people taking pictures. So I wanted something to prove that there is still that pagan connection and there is still that carnival and creativity and getting really dressed up and being really weird, because I enjoy that. I think that is a part of queer culture which is important to me and should be celebrated, so we just threw a huge costume party. The ratio was really good. More so than most Halloween parties I have been to. Almost everyone was in costume.

MRR: I was going to ask you about the "Prom Massacre." There was a punk rock prom held in the states. Somewhere either in upper state New York or Pennsylvania. Was the idea behind the prom massacre like the anti-prom?

Will: It pretty much was an anti-prom. Well a lot of people wanted a prom. It was actually a request, because people liked the theme. So regulars throw out their own ideas for themes and the prom was something that kept coming up. For me I never liked prom stuff of any kind or school dances. I never went to them and I never wanted to so for me making the prom a prom massacre demonstrates my own distaste for them. But also I think proms for punks or for queers or for queer punks—I can see why people want to do them. These folks don't fit into normal school culture and have that need to do it their own way. They might enjoy certain aspects of that party but just feel excluded because of the way they look or because of who they like so I think that's why it is happening. I think there is definitely a connection for why we would do a prom at Vaseline because even in the gay community there are proms for queer youth, so there have been gay proms and stuff like that, so it sort of makes sense that in the punk community there would be punk proms because the punks are too cool or too different to go to the normal high school prom. They would rather go to something a little more edgy and interesting where there are kids that they would actually want to hang out with.

MRR: What happened at the prom?

Will: Well because it was a prom massacre, the point was that somebody had to get massacred. So we mixed a whole bunch of corn oil with red dye. The plan was that we were going to kill people, turn the lights off early in the night, have someone scream and have someone fall on the floor covered in blood. It just ended up being too busy and too hard to coordinate. So at the end of the night when people were dancing some people started covering each other with blood and pretending to die on the floor and being dragged off by someone else and people didn't understand what was happening. They thought that people were actually getting injured or stabbed. Some people got freaked out, but it was a

"prom massacre" and it took people a while to see the humor in it. It seemed all fine and normal to the people who were sober but everyone else was a little miffed by it. So I don't know if that will happen again, but things like "Vasoween" will happen because Halloween will happen and things like "Shame" are themes that happen every year. "Shame" is our answer to "Pride." Whenever "Pride" happens, Vaseline will always do a "Shame," which is to counter it, because Pride is so mainstream and so corporate and so commercial and so homogenized and bland and boring that there should be something to counter it—the opposite of that would be "Shame." Because Vaseline's crowd is mostly marginal crowds of gay culture, the way we express our sexuality or enjoy our sexuality could be shameful for a lot of people who find mainstream "Pride" acceptable, so that is our answer to it. We want people to celebrate shamefulness and do shameful things because we don't have any morality to place on those things. It is really a subversion of "Pride," so we have this "Shame" festival every year. That will be something that will always happen as long as Vaseline is going.

MRR: Who are some of the folks who have performed at Vaseline events, and what did they do?

Will: We had performers like Vaginal "Creme" Davis, who performed her virgin sacrifice called "Cherries in the Snow." Glen Meadmore, who performed with his band doing his usual Born Again Christian honky tonk country. Miss Guy from the Toilet Boys has DJ'd. Kembra Pfahler (of the Voluptuous Horror of Karen Black) performed her tribute to *Blade Runner*, and her version of the *Titanic*'s theme song. The Need has performed their rock opera wonders. Tracy & Her Plastics spread her video age new wave. Jayne County took me out for dinner but never actually reached the stage of Vaseline. We have had locals like Shaftdrive (80s all girl metal band), The Hidden Cameras (new local queer indie rock experience), C.J. Sneeze & The STDs (Toronto's answer to Texas Terry or Wendy O' Williams), and many more.

MRR: What other things do you have planned for some of the Vaseline events coming up?

Will: Upcoming plans include Cherie Currie of the Runaways. I hope to bring hardcore favorites Limp Wrist. I'd also like to bring some glam acts like the Toilet Boys, Candyass from NYC. I would also like to bring Le Tigre, and Bullet, also from NYC. I have an idea for a night themed after filmmaker Isaac Julien's movie named "Young Soul Rebels"—a story about a punk boy falling in love with a pirate radio station soul boy. Maybe also a rock 'n' roll disco punkteque night, I am going to start a small no-new wave off shoot called "Peroxide." I plan to get Jayne County to DJ or perform.

MRR: When does Vaseline take place?

Will: Vaseline takes place the last Friday of every month.

MRR: How can people get in touch with you if they want to find out about Vaseline? Is there a posting for Vaseline?

Will: Yeah, I post on "Holy Tit Clamps," which is a great resource for any queer punk bands or people who want to travel or anything like that. Larry Bob has listings of every band that is on tour that is within the queer musical genre and he also lists all sites are cool to book with and listed it under there if they want to get in touch with me. All my information is there. They can email me. My email address is apocalipstick@hotmail.com. I list on other sites that are sort of meccas for this genre, like say Heartcore Records, Chainsaw Records, and Mr. Lady Records. All have message boards that are great places to look for messages. Heartcore Records is heartcorerecords.com and Chainsaw is chainsaw.com and Mr. Lady Records is mrladyrecords.com. They have great message boards, so that is usually where I post on the internet. My mailing address is 888 Dupont Street, Unit 100 / Toronto, ON / M6G 1Z8 / Canada.

